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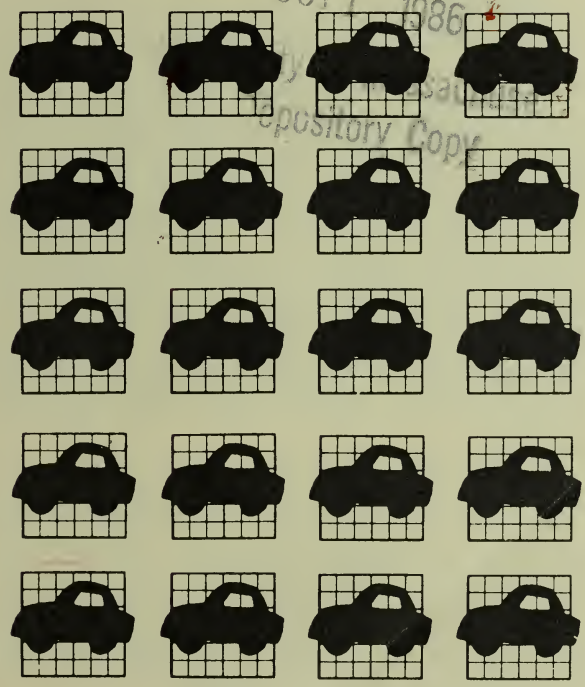
Massachusetts

# PS

Passenger  Safety

## Program

A funded project of the  
Governor's Highway Safety Bureau



Massachusetts Department of Public Health

# The Passenger Safety Program

of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health was created to promote the use of safety belts and child safety seats. Its goal is to reduce deaths and injuries from automobile accidents.

The program is designed to be used primarily by service providers—health care professionals, law enforcement officers, and educators, as well as service organizations, businesses, community volunteers, and students. These individuals, by using the program resources described below, provide passenger safety information to the general public.



## Resource Center

The Resource Center contains a comprehensive collection of passenger safety materials, which are available free of charge. The collection includes printed materials, such as brochures, fact sheets, journals, reference materials, posters, and display items. The Resource Center also houses an extensive audiovisual library of films, videotapes, slide programs, and learning kits designed for various age and interest groups.

A catalog describing the content and format of these materials is available. To preview audiovisual materials, users are encouraged to call for an appointment. Depending on availability, materials may be reserved and borrowed for up to two weeks.

The Resource Center is open during normal working hours. Although it can be used on a drop-in basis, a scheduled appointment will ensure that staff are available for consultation.



## **Technical Consultation**

Program staff are available to answer questions about passenger safety. In addition, staff members can provide community groups with information on conducting local outreach programs.



## **Media Campaigns**

Two major campaigns are conducted each year to bring the need for passenger safety to the attention of the public. In the winter, February is observed as "Massachusetts Passenger Safety Month." The summer campaign, "Make It Click," runs from Memorial Day through Labor Day weekend. There are many ways volunteers can become involved in these campaigns. If you are interested, contact the program staff.



## **Car Seat Loan Programs**

Passenger Safety Program staff promote and help develop car seat loan or rental programs in hospitals and community health centers throughout the state. A list of Massachusetts car seat loan programs is available upon request.



## Speakers Bureau

Myths, misinformation, and lack of habit are responsible for a large number of preventable deaths and injuries resulting from motor vehicle accidents. Educational programs play a major role in helping people sort out the seat belt facts from the fiction.

As a result of increasing public interest in passenger safety, the Massachusetts Passenger Safety Speakers Bureau has been established. Trained speakers are available to present informative and entertaining programs to community groups, businesses and professional organizations. Among the speakers are health care providers, educators, law enforcement officers, corporate safety managers, and community volunteers. To request a speaker, contact the program staff at least two weeks prior to the date of the engagement.



## Training

Training sessions for individuals interested in promoting passenger safety are conducted on a regular basis. Special sessions for groups are available upon request.



## Newsletter

A quarterly newsletter, *Update*, highlights upcoming events, new products, technical information, and recent legislative decisions. To receive the newsletter, contact the program staff and ask that your name be added to the mailing list.

## **Prevention is our goal.**

For the past two decades, automobile accidents have been the number one killer of Americans, ages 1 to 45. In Massachusetts, over 400 people are killed and an additional 50,000 are injured each year in car accidents. Many of these deaths and injuries could have been prevented through the use of seat belts and child safety seats.

While most people protect themselves and their children from disease, fire, and drowning, few take seriously the risks involved in highway travel. Through continued community education and outreach efforts, the Massachusetts Passenger Safety Program hopes to make every person's ride a safe ride.

### **Passenger Safety Laws**

Attempts to decrease the number of automobile tragedies began in the early seventies. Because studies revealed that educational efforts alone had a limited impact on the use of seat belts and child safety seats, many states began to consider passenger safety legislation. By 1986, every state had adopted passenger safety laws for young children, and sixteen states had laws covering older children, teens and adults.

The Massachusetts Child Passenger Safety Law, which became effective in January 1982, requires all children under the age of five to be fastened in a properly adjusted safety seat or seat belt when riding in a motor vehicle. The 1986 Seat Belt Law requires all front and back seat motor vehicle occupants to wear seat belts and includes seat belts in the annual automobile inspection.



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**Program**

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